

# Berks Landfill

**EPA Region 3**

Pennsylvania

Berks County

Sinking Springs

**EPA ID#** PAD000651810

**6th** Congressional District

**Last Update:** January 2002

**Other Names:**

Stabatrol

Berks County Landfill

## Current Site Status

The EPA has been overseeing the cleanup of the Berks Landfill where construction was completed in October 2000. This completion of construction commemorates the 760th Superfund Site nationwide that has been cleaned. Construction started in June 2000 and ended in October 2000. Construction included repairing the cap on the eastern landfill. Also, the leachate collection system was cleaned, inspected, and repaired including the reshaping and relining of the three leachate collection ponds.

Now, the site is in the final stage of operation, maintenance, and monitoring which includes activities such as monitoring landfill gases and groundwater; mowing and reseeding the grass on the eastern landfill; and repairing the pumps in the leachate collection ponds. This operation, maintenance, and monitoring phase will continue for many years. During this time EPA will continue to oversee the monitoring being done. For example, in October and November 2001, EPA collected water samples from residential wells in order to check on the

water quality.

## **Site Description**

The Berks Landfill Superfund Site is located in Spring Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania. It is approximately seven miles southwest of the City of Reading. The site consists of two closed landfills: a 49-acre eastern landfill and a 19-acre western landfill.

The property historically was the location of a iron ore mine. Later from the 1950s to the 1980s, the Berks Landfill operated as a municipal landfill. In 1975, the landfill was granted a permit by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources to discharge leachate from its collection system into an adjacent stream. Also, in 1975, the eastern landfill was granted a solid waste permit to accept municipal refuse and demolition refuse.

The Berks Landfill became a Superfund Site when it was listed on the National Priorities List of most hazardous waste sites in October 4, 1989. A fence was erected around the eastern landfill, the existing cap was repaired, and a pumping station was constructed to convey the leachate to the local wastewater treatment plant.

### **Site Responsibility**

Cleanup of this site is the responsibility of Federal and State governments and parties potentially responsible for site contamination.


### **NPL Listing History**

Our country's most serious, uncontrolled, or abandoned hazardous waste sites can be cleaned using federal money. To be eligible for federal cleanup money, a site must be put on the National Priorities List. This site was proposed to the list on June 24, 1988 and formally added to the list October 4, 1989.

## **Threats and Contaminants**

Sampling of on-site monitoring wells in the 1980s discovered the groundwater was contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and metals. VOCs include vinyl chloride, TCE and benzene. The groundwater on-site can pose a threat to human health if

consumed.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html> 

## Cleanup Progress

In July 1997, EPA selected a remedy to repair the eastern landfill cap; repair and continued operation of the existing leachate collection system; long-term sampling and monitoring of a sentinel well, residential wells, on-site wells, landfill gas, and aquatic habitat; and institutional controls to prevent future consumption of on-site groundwater and to restrict future development on-site.

EPA gave the parties potentially responsible for the pollution (PRPs) the opportunity to provide good faith offers to do the cleanup work. None were recieved, so EPA ordered them to perform the work. In accordance with the order, a subgroup of the PRPs developed a remedial design that outlined how the landfill cap and leachate collection system would be repaired. EPA conditionally approved this final design on September 30, 1999. Following approval of the design, EPA approved a plan for implementing the design on January 13, 2000. The PRPs selected a construction firm to build the remedy in March 2000.

### Construction Activities:

The PRPs submitted a plan detailing the management of construction and EPA approved the plan in May 2000. Construction started in June 2000 and continued until October 2000 with regular oversight from EPA and the Bureau of Reclamation. During the construction season the eastern landfill was cleared of vegetation, covered by soil, and seeded and on the the western landfill 7,000 feet of inspection trails were laid. The leachate collection lines and manholes were cleaned, inspected and repaired and the three leachate collection ponds were re-shaped and re-lined for an approximate volume of 1.5 million gallons. This leachate is then pumped to the local sewage treatment plant. To monitor the site conditions nine gas monitoring probes were installed as well as a sentinel monitoring well. A total of 300 trees

were planted to improve a wetland on the site.

After construction was completed, EPA conducted two inspections one in October 31, 2000 and a second on November 14, 2000 and determined that the remedy was constructed in accordance with the design. Long-term monitoring of the site to evaluate the groundwater, on-site wells and gas probes, residential wells, and the sentinel well started in December 2000 and will continue for many years.

## Contacts

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Detailed public files (Administrative Record) on EPA's actions and decisions for this site can be examined at the following locations:

Sinking Springs Public Library

506 Penn Avenue  
Sinking Springs, PA 19608  
610-678-4311

U.S. EPA Region III  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
215-814-3157

Please call to schedule an appointment.